

How you can help keep our water clean

There are seven simple steps to clean water. How many of these seven simple steps did you do this week?

1. Practice good car care.

Have you ever noticed a rainbow colored puddle on a parking lot or the street? The rainbow colors that you see are caused by petroleum products like oil and gas. Car oil does not mix with water; it sits on top of water. Cars leak oil when they are broken. A single drop of oil can pollute many gallons of water! To keep our water clean, keep cars fixed.



2. Fertilize sparingly & carefully.

Storm drains found in streets and yards go into our lakes and streams. So, when we fertilize our lawn we could also be fertilizing our lakes and streams. Fertilizer is good for our lawn, but it is bad for our water.

3. Clean up after your pet.

Did you know that pet waste has bad bacteria in it that can make animals and humans sick? To keep our water clean, pick up the waste from your pets and put it in the trash.



4. Save water.

When we put too much water on our yards, the extra water carries pollution into storm drains that lead to our rivers and lakes.

Remember, storm drains lead to our lakes and rivers!

5. Choose earth-friendly landscaping.



The chemicals we put on our lawns and gardens to kill weeds can pollute our lakes and rivers if washed into storm drains.

6. Carefully store & dispose of household cleaners, chemicals, & oil.

Did you know that many household cleaners and chemicals can be dangerous to us, our pets, and the environment if they are not thrown away properly? These materials pollute our waterways if washed or dumped into storm drains.



7. Keep pollution out of storm drains.

Storm drains and roadside ditches lead to our lakes and streams. So, any oil, pet waste, leaves or dirty water from washing your car that enters a storm drain will get into our lakes and streams.



The car oil I spill on the parking lot and the napkin I drop in the street are not a lot. When added to everyone else's spills and litter, it adds up to create a big problem!

Let's make one thing
Perfectly Clear.
our water
Genesee County Community Water Quality Consortium

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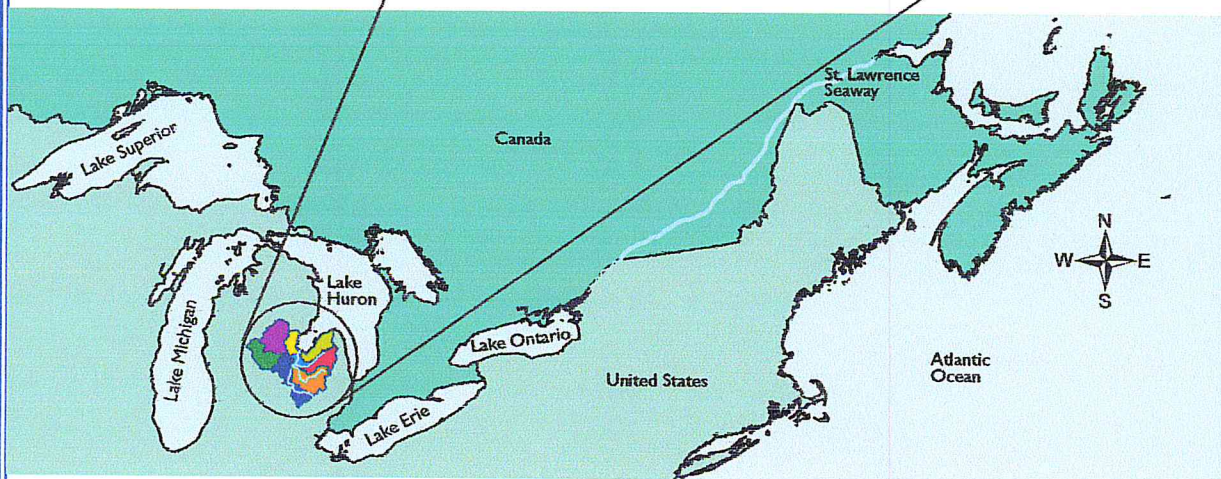
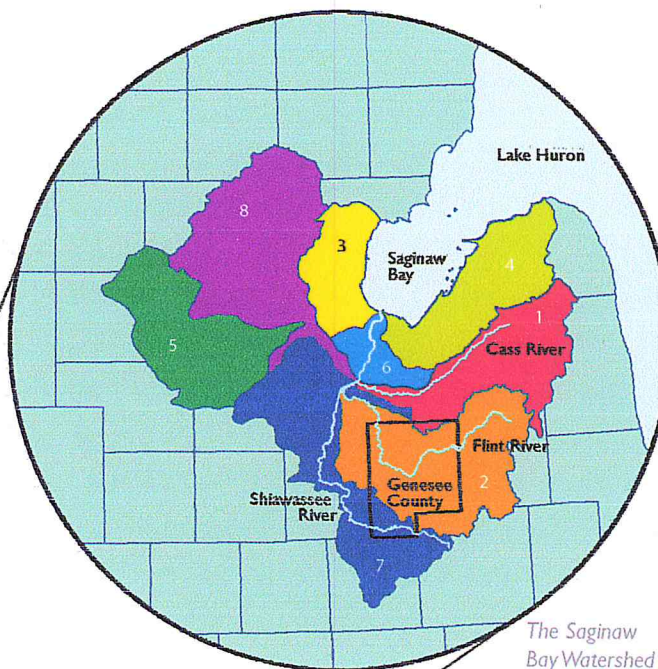


Oceans, Lakes and Rivers Are Connected

A watershed is the area of land that drains water into a particular river, lake or even ocean. Everything we do on the land effects "Our Water." When rain falls to the ground, it travels over top of land or underground into lakes, rivers, streams and creeks.

This is the Saginaw Bay Watershed. The Saginaw Bay Watershed is made up of many smaller watersheds. Can you find the Flint River? The Flint River Watershed is one of the smaller watersheds that together with other watersheds, like the Cass River or Shiawassee River Watersheds, help form the Saginaw Bay Watershed. The Flint River Watershed is part of the Saginaw Bay Watershed, which is part of the larger Lake Huron Watershed.

The Flint River Watershed covers most of Genesee County. There are two other major watersheds in Genesee County: the Shiawassee River Watershed and the Cass River Watershed. Can you find the Shiawassee River Watershed at the Southwest corner of Genesee County and the Cass River Watershed in the North?



Legend

- Michigan Counties
- Genesee County
- Water
- Canada
- United States

Saginaw Bay Watersheds

- 1 Cass River Watershed
- 2 Flint River Watershed
- 3 Kawkawlin-Pine River Watershed
- 4 Pigeon-Wiscoggin River Watershed
- 5 Pine River Watershed
- 6 Saginaw River Watershed
- 7 Shiawassee River Watershed
- 8 Tittabawassee River Watershed

Watersheds fit together like little bowls inside of bigger ones. The Flint River drains into the Saginaw River and the Saginaw River drains into the Saginaw Bay. Therefore, the Flint River is part of the Saginaw Bay Watershed. Saginaw Bay is part of the Lake Huron. Lake Huron drains to Lake Erie, then to Lake Ontario, then through the St. Lawrence River and finally all the way to the Atlantic Ocean! Now that you know how water travels from Genesee County to the Atlantic Ocean, can you trace the path on this map?

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What Is Your Watershed Address?

The Flint River Watershed is made up of smaller watersheds called sub-watersheds. They are shown on this map in different colors. Can you find the sub-watershed where your city or town is located?

How Do Watersheds Get Their Name?

A watershed is the area of land that drains water into a particular river, lake or even ocean. Watersheds are named after the lake, stream or river where that area of land's water drains into. For example, the Flint River Watershed is called that because the Flint River is the water body where that watershed drains to. Similarly, the Gilkey Creek Sub-Watershed is called that because that particular area of land drains to the Gilkey Creek.

What Watersheds Do You Live In?

We are all a resident of a watershed, just like we are residents of a county and town in Michigan. Every one of us has a watershed address. In Genesee County, we are part of a big watershed called the Great Lakes Basin, the Saginaw Bay Watershed and either the Flint River, Cass River or Shiawassee River Watersheds. We also live within a sub-watershed of the Flint River, Cass River or Shiawassee River Watersheds.

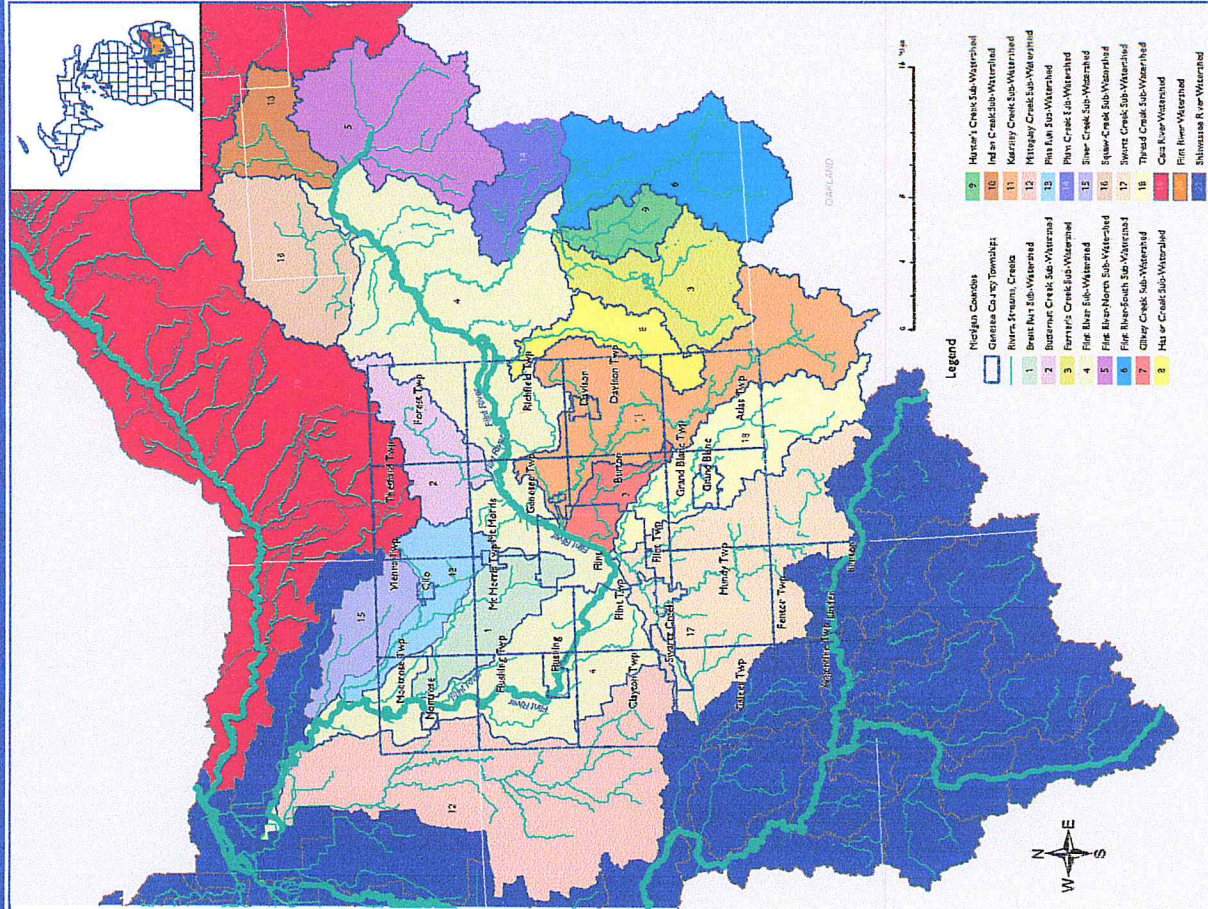
Use this space to write down your watershed address.

Street Address	Watershed Address
Country: United States	Ocean: Atlantic Ocean
Region: Great Lakes	Major Water Body: Great Lakes
State: Michigan	Major Bay: Saginaw Bay, Lake Huron
County: Genesee	Large River: Flint/Shiawassee/Cass River
Town/City: _____	Tributary River/Creek: _____

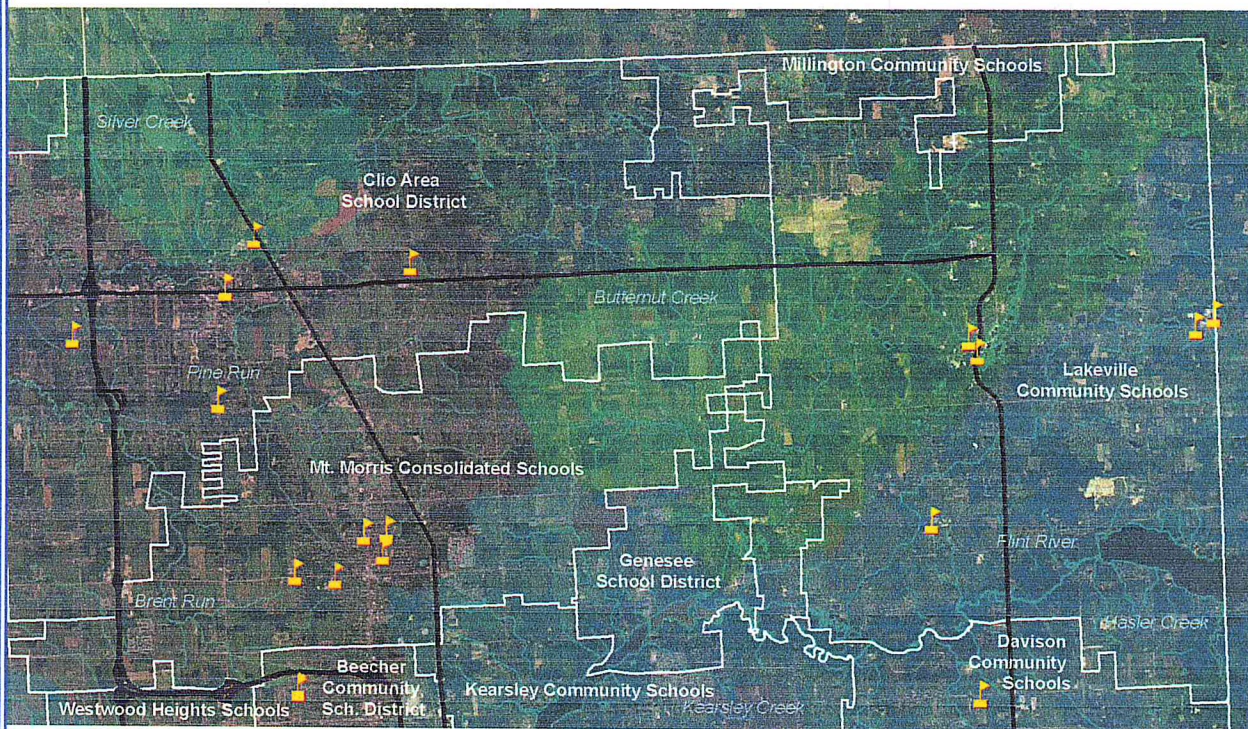
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In What Sub-Watershed Is Your School Located?



This map shows your school. Can you find it?
Are there any nearby rivers, streams or creeks?

In what sub-watershed is your school located?

As townships, towns and cities grow, more roads and parking lots have to be built. However, when it rains or snows, pavement does not soak up water. Do you see any paved parking lots or roads outside your school?

Unfortunately, as clean rain or snow melt (also called storm water) flows over pavement or the ground, it picks up and carries with it pollution like dirt, litter, oil, leaves and animal waste into storm drains. Where does storm water go after it flows into a storm drain?

The storm water that enters storm drains flows directly to our lakes, rivers and streams, carrying all the pollution it has picked up along the way. Common pollutants that wash into our lakes, rivers and streams in storm water include:

- Car fluids such as motor oil or gas
- Chemicals used to kill weeds or fertilizers to grow lawns and gardens
- Pet wastes
- Litter
- Soil from bare ground where vegetation has been removed or killed

When polluted storm water enters our lakes and rivers, it can cause many problems:

- The plants and animals that live nearby may become sick.
- The humans who drink the water or use it for swimming may become sick.
- The humans who live next to water may notice a bad odor or excessive growth of algae.
- The humans or animals that eat the fish from that polluted water might get sick.

*This is why we need to work together and follow
the seven simple steps to keep our water clean!*

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